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THE WARRANT OFFICER IN THE VOLUNTEER
FORCE

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Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania

5 January 1973

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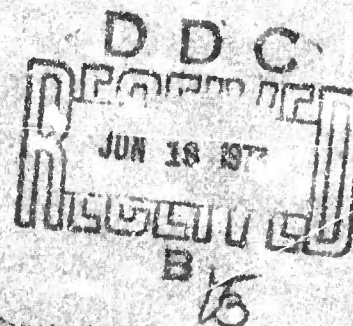


THE WARRANT OFFICER

IN

THE VOLUNTEER FORCE

BY



LIEUTENANT COLONEL PAUL P. CORONEOS

ATR DEFENSE ARTILLERY

TECHNICAL
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THE WARRANT OFFICER

IN

THE VOLUNTEER FORCE

A MONOGRAPH

by

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Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania
5 January 1973

ABSTRACT

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Because of its small size and a lack of uniform policy in its use and status across time and in the individual services the Warrant Officer Corps has developed serious career structure and identity problems. With forces reduction, higher technological dependence and the increased cost of manpower it is no longer possible to neglect a unique personnel component of the Armed Forces, especially when it possesses such a significant potential to alleviate serious personnel problems in the other components. As the Army turns to volunteers and reduces the officer ratio a redesigned warrant officer corps can help ease the transition and improve the quality of the Army. Our sister services are on different courses with their warrant officer programs. All programs are improvisations and Congress is insisting on uniform policies and equity across the services. This is a proposal to seize the initiative and develop a joint services position while Congress focuses on officers. Thus DOD will be ready when the warrant officer's inevitable turn comes. It is proposed that: The additional grades CW05 and CW06 be added to form a full 30 year career structure; Dual componentcy be eliminated; All warrant officers receive warrants and cease commissioning (Navy and Marines); Eliminate the limited duty officer; Centralize warrant officer management (DOD and Army); and Devise competitive pay scales.

PREFACE

This document represents a complete reversal of sentiment on substantive issues from those held by the author while serving on the DA Staff. These reversals in attitude are attributed to the ideal circumstances provided by the US Army War College for adequate research, thought, and reflection. Special thanks for the provision of basic documents, advice and sound opinions is extended to:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| ABSTRACT. | ii |
| PREFACE | iii |
| LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS | vi |
| CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION. | 1 |
| Statement of Problem. | 1 |
| Objective | 3 |
| II. BACKGROUND. | 5 |
| Pre World War I Origins | 5 |
| Pre World War II Policy | 5 |
| Policy in World War II and After. | 7 |
| Current Policy. | 8 |
| III. IDENTITY CRISIS | 11 |
| Impact of Officer Grade | |
| Limitation Act | 11 |
| Congressional Dilemma | 15 |
| Current Identity Problems | 17 |
| Summary | 19 |
| IV. DUAL COMPONENTCY | 22 |
| Problem | 22 |
| Summary | 24 |
| V. CAREER PROGRESSION. | 26 |
| Background. | 26 |
| Problem | 27 |
| Volar Impact. | 30 |
| Additional Grades Discussion. | 31 |
| Navy and USMC Programs. | 33 |
| Summary | 37 |
| VI. PAY | 41 |
| Senior NCO Pay Loss | 41 |
| Flight Pay Disparity. | 42 |
| Pay as a Management Tool. | 43 |
| Summary | 44 |
| VII. BROADEN WARRANT OFFICER TECHNICAL | |
| FIELDS | 47 |
| Problem and Discussion. | 47 |
| Summary | 49 |
| VIII. EDUCATION | 51 |
| Problem and Discussion. | 51 |
| Summary | 52 |
| IX. CENTRALIZED VS DECENTRALIZED | |
| PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT | 55 |
| Background and Discussion | 55 |
| Separate Identity Factor. | 58 |
| Levels of Skill Related to | |
| Grade and Positions. | 59 |
| Summary | 61 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont.)

| | Page |
|--|------|
| CHAPTER X. PROPOSED JOINT SERVICES POSITION. | 63 |
| General | 63 |
| Additional Grades | 63 |
| Single Componentcy | 65 |
| Identity Crisis | 66 |
| Strategy for Congress | 66 |
| Summary | 68 |
| SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY | 71 |

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

| Figure | Page |
|--|------|
| 1. Fiscal Year 1973 DOD Warrant Officer Authorizations. | 3 |
| 2. OGLA Impact on Authorized Officer Spaces Caused by Increasing Warrant Officer Spaces. | 14 |
| 3. Regular Army Warrant Officer Promotion System. | 22 |
| 4. Selected Grades Pay Comparison | 41 |
| 5. Illustrative Flight Pay Table. | 43 |

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The post-Vietnam period is critical in US military manpower development. Strength reductions in late 1972 have surpassed the lows achieved in 1945 when the country precipitously and euphorically disbanded the world's mightiest war machine. The Army is now far below the Eisenhower administration personnel ceilings which supported the once discredited strategy of a "bigger bang for the buck." Manpower costs are soaring in order to make possible a volunteer force and eliminate the draft. The American public is disillusioned with wars and the military establishment is regarded with hostility and suspicion because of its great cost and the lackluster results achieved in Vietnam. As a consequence, Congress is being especially critical of Department of Defense manpower policies and proposals. Evermore, Congressmen feel frustrated at not being able to fathom the intricacies of defense planning and budgets and are insisting on more of a say in the important (measured in terms of dollars) defense management decisions.

In this atmosphere of close public scrutiny, the Army, along with the sister services has been directed to assess closely the high cost military manpower components and to propose an integrated Defense approach which is fair and justifiable across the services. The top six enlisted grades have been moving along under an always

more closely managed DOD fiscal program since 1967. Officer personnel management has proved less tractable and after 10 years of hesitant attempts to closely integrate policies and eliminate serious disparities is now under heavy Congressional pressure to produce a true DOD officer personnel management system. During the 1973 defense budget hearings Congressional leaders threatened to refuse future action on officer manpower legislation until an acceptable DOD plan is submitted.¹

Still another important military manpower component remains to be reassessed in the context of a volunteer Army and the demand for a more integrated approach--the warrant officer corps. Because of its small size, difficulties posed by current law and differing perceptions of use and need among the services it has proved to be the neglected stepchild within DOD and in each of the services. With the present intensive effort to restructure the officer corps, it is essential that concurrent consideration be given to the role of the warrant officers. If the military is to effectively use its most valuable asset, manpower, future legislative proposals must be constructed with a clearer view of the role each personnel element of the service team is to play.

FISCAL YEAR 1973
DOD WARRANT OFFICER AUTHORIZATIONS*
(PROBLEM DIMENSIONS)

| <u>SERVICE</u> | <u>NUMBER AUTHORIZED</u> | <u>PERCENT OF TOTAL FORCE</u> |
|----------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| USA | 15,453 | 1.87% |
| USN | 4,380 | .075% |
| USMC | 1,539 | .078% |
| USAF | 120 | .02% |

FIGURE 1

*Data obtained from OSD M&RA, January 1973

OBJECTIVE

It is the purpose of this monograph to concentrate on the uses of the warrant officer corps in the Army under VOLAR and to assess certain difficulties which if surmounted will make the warrant officer even more valuable to the organization. The need for a warrant officer corps is believed not subject to serious challenge within the Army and thus need only be addressed to the extent necessary to emphasize certain limitations posed to its usefulness by the officer corps. Throughout this paper, sister-service positions and views will be discussed as they affect the Army position and in conclusion a proposed common ground will be offered about which a joint DOD warrant officer program can be shaped.

CHAPTER I

FOOTNOTES

1. US Department of Defense, Officer Personnel Management Study, Agenda Materials for First Study Group Meeting, 23 August 1972, Agenda Item 2 with related attachments (hereafter referred to as "DOD OPMS Agenda").

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

PRE WORLD WAR I ORIGINS

The rank of warrant officer anti-dates the birth of our nation and was an honored title given in the navies of many countries long before 1775 to specialists in specific areas of competence where supervisory skill and expert knowledge were needed to keep a ship operating. The rank was first used in the United States by the Navy in 1775 and is thus historically a Navy grade.¹ It was recognized only by the Navy and Coast Guard prior to World War I. The first warrant officers appointed in the Army were members of the mine planter service and they served as masters, mates, chief engineers and assistant engineers of the Coast Artillery Corps. Army historians trace back to 1886 positions which were later identified as warrant officer spaces. In 1918 a Congressional Act established 3 warrant officer pay grades. By 1920 the Army was authorized 1,120 warrant officers in addition to those used in the mine planter service. There was no great rush to fill the quota and in 1926 Congress reduced it to approximately 650.

PRE WORLD WAR II POLICY

During the 1930's the Army was uncertain of its need for warrant officers and used the grade to ease out former commissioned

officers and as an incentive for senior enlisted personnel of long service. The Army stated its view of warrant officers to the Military Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives in 1936:

For the future, then, the grade provides a suitable reward for outstanding noncommissioned officers who are too old to be commissioned and who otherwise could look forward to no further advancement.

In the Army there are organizational needs for only two general classes of personnel, namely, officers and enlisted men.

Thus primarily to reward those outstanding noncommissioned officers, there has been created an office or position (warrant officer grade) not demanded by organizational needs, but which is justifiable, even though the position does not fit readily into the military system.²

In 1939, the G-1 in a memorandum to the Army Chief of Staff reiterated essentially the above view.

POLICY IN WORLD WAR II AND AFTER

Throughout World War II and after, the Army and US Air Force vacillated on the need for a warrant officer corps and in 1958 the USAF decided to stop using that category of personnel and phase out the remaining members of its warrant officer corps. The second major piece of legislation affecting Army warrant officers was passed in 1941. It created two grades (and ranks) of warrant officers--warrant officer junior grade (WOJG) and Chief warrant officer (CWO). Their authority and responsibility was broadened and the flight officer was added to the warrant officer corps. It took the

Army Air Corps most of World War II to get rid of the flight officer and restrict flying to only commissioned officers and is probably an unspoken factor in the USAF 1958 decision to do away with the use of warrant officers entirely.

During World War II there was no clear policy on warrant officers within the Army. Appointment, assignment, promotion, use and training was decentralized to major commanders with little supervision by the War Department. They were managed so loosely that accurate data on their number is not currently obtainable although thousands were appointed. After World War II, in 1948, the Army applied the concept of dual componentcy used in the officer corps (reserve officer, regular officer) to warrant officers. It was decided to give competitive exams and appoint 6,000 regular warrant officers. This was accomplished by 1949 as part of a long range warrant officer career plan. Due to the Korean war the plan was abandoned in 1950.

The military paybill of 1949, better known as the Career Compensation Act of 1949, provided two new pay rates for warrant officers. These were incorporated into the warrant officer structure by keeping the warrant officer junior grade, and expanding the grade of chief warrant officer to three pay rates, CWO, W2; CWO, W3; CWO, W4. By the Warrant Officer Personnel Act of 1954, the three new pay rates of 1949 became grades and the WOJG was redesignated WO.

In 1951 a Defense Department sponsored committee recommended warrant officers be eliminated from all services in favor of a limited duty officer (LDO) program. Yet, despite this finding the committee urged the passage of the Warrant Officer Personnel Act of 1954 which was intended to bind all the services by the same general concepts of warrant officer utilization and personnel management.³ DOD continued to push the LDO program but the Army and USAF refused to use it and as a result it is used today by only the Navy and Marines as a follow-on program for their warrant officers.

CURRENT POLICY

After the Korean war, the Army began a serious appraisal of the need and role of the warrant officer corps. The first DA study was finished and approved in 1954 and it resulted in further studies and refinements until in January 1957 the Army issued an approved concept and policy which was released publicly on 19 February 1957.⁴ Its importance justifies reproducing it herein in full:

THE FUTURE OF THE WARRANT OFFICER

1. The warrant officer continues to have a definite place in the Army's personnel structure in spite of anxieties in some quarters that the Army may have little need for the warrant officer in the future.
2. An increasing requirement for personnel to operate and maintain mechanical, electrical, and electronic equipment provides a firm future for

the Warrant Officer. There jobs in which continuity of both assignment and requirement obtains must be filled by personnel who possess a high degree of skill acquired through extensive training. Because of the extension of the warrant officers into the technical areas a gradual reduction of warrant officer spaces in the administrative and supply areas will evolve.

3. The warrant officer, under the Army's present concept is a highly skilled technician who is provided to fill those positions above the enlisted level which are too specialized in scope to permit the effective development and continued utilization of broadly trained, branch qualified commissioned officers.

4. Warrant Officers will be utilized only to fill bona fide organizational requirements and will not be considered as a category of personnel established as a reward or incentive for either enlisted personnel or former commissioned officers.⁵

Since the 1957 pronouncement, the Army has faithfully and successfully endeavored to put into effect a warrant officer program which makes the best possible use of that individuals unique talents and capabilities. However, certain basic defects and attitudes still plague the warrant officers as a group which if properly confronted and corrected at this time would help the Army greatly in its efforts to reconfigure into a volunteer force.

CHAPTER II

FOOTNOTES

1. Monte Bourjaily Jr., A Brief History of the Warrant Officer in the Military Services of the United States, p. 1 (Hereafter referred to as "Bourjaily WO History"). Most historical references in Chapter II are based on the work of Mr. Bourjaily.

2. Letter, US War Department to Military Affairs Committee, United States Congress, House, Subject: Increase in Warrant Officers, (G-1/14269, A6221.79, 3-19-36), 22 April 1936. Original letter could not be located but content is quoted from extract in: US Department of Army, Office of Personnel Operations, Report-Army Warrant Officer Career Program, p. 23. Content is further corroborated by comparison of same quote in the historical pamphlet by: Bourjaily WO History, p. 4.

3. Bourjaily WO History, pp. 7-8. See also, Discussion of this matter in US Congress, House, Committee of Armed Services, Subcommittee No. 2 Subcommittee Hearings on H.R. 6372, to Revise Certain Laws to Warrant Officers of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard, and for Other Purposes, pp. 3638-3640 (Hereafter referred to as "House Armed Services Committee Hearings on Warrant Officers--1954").

4. Bourjaily WO History, pp. 8-9. See also, US Department of the Army, Office of Personnel Operations, Report-Army Warrant Officer Career Program, pp. 32-33 (Hereafter referred to as "OPO WO Study of 1966").

5. OPO WO Study of 1966, p. 11. The official concept is as reproduced herein. The public announcements cited in footnote 4, combined paragraphs 3 and 4 but did not vary significantly in content.

CHAPTER III

IDENTITY CRISIS

IMPACT OF OFFICER GRADE LIMITATION ACT

The most important and critical problem affecting warrant officers and their usefulness to the Army has to do with certain DOD strength accounting practices and Congressional enactments. First, the DOD has a policy which insists on including warrant officers with the commissioned officers in determining the much referred to and discussed officer-enlisted ratio. Through a process of informal DOD and military department negotiations this ratio is established at the tolerance level which it is felt Congress will accept. In the Army it is the service secretary who establishes the number of warrant officers to be authorized during a given fiscal year.

The fundamental difficulty for warrant officers arises however, in the manner in which the Officer Grade Limitation Act (Section 3202, Title 10, USC, annotated) OGLA, is applied annually to determine the number of general and field grade officers authorized by grade. By law, the field grade and general officer distribution is a function of the total number of commissioned officers authorized by the Secretary of the Army.¹ Thus in making this rather important computation, the warrant officers must be subtracted from total officer strength. The result is a reduced basis for authorizing needed field grade and general officer

spaces. With this situation the officer and warrant officer corps are irreconcilably cast in the role of adversaries. Both claim a need for and can justify more personnel than can be authorized; thus concessions to one directly damages the other.

This particular problem more than any other convinced the USAF in 1959 to scuttle their plans to build a 20,000 man warrant officer corps. In a study of 23 June 1959, the dicotomy was enunciated and the losses to the officer corps were made obvious.² In the desperate USAF field grade and general officer squeeze which has caused them to seek legislative relief from OGLA every year since their inception, the warrant officer corps was deliberately sacrificed. The 1959 USAF study seized upon the relatively new enlisted super grades (E8, E9) and rationalized a policy which put most of the 20,000 validated warrant officers spaces into the senior NCO grades.³ In the case of the USAF other factors are also of consequence in their decision to eliminate warrant officers. Their unfavorable experience with the World War II warrant officer flyers (flying officers) remains in the memories of the commissioned ranks as a threat; this threat has been greatly reinforced recently by the Army's decision to emphasize warrant officer flyers.⁴ During the 90th Congressional hearings, a USAF representative, General Bell, was asked if the Air Force had considered the Army approach of using warrant officers as helicopter pilots. General Bell pointed out commissioned pilots were higher quality and had potential of growing in the technological areas in which the Air Force operates.⁵

Because the Army did not have nearly as formidable a field grade and general officer problem as the USAF no serious thought was ever given during this same period (post World War II) to eliminating the warrant officer from the structure. But the conflicting interest continues and on a very regular basis hard decisions must be made by Department of the Army (DA) as to whether needed technical skills will be filled by warrant officers at the expense of the officer corps. Needless to say, the preponderant influence in the decisionmaking process at the DA level is wielded by the commission officer corps and therefore only those proposals for additional warrant officers which have the very strongest high level backing survive. As an example, in the recent past a study was conducted for the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Lieutenant General Walter T. Kerwin, to apprise him of the status of proposals to create and/or convert warrant officer spaces.⁶ The key factor assessed in the study was the impact of adding warrant officer spaces to field grade and general officer authorizations under . . . General Kerwin was told that between 1967 and 1971, DCSPER was approached to add 2,324 warrant officer spaces to the Army. To the date of this study 601 were approved and 1,072 still were pending. The remaining 651 spaces for warrant officer were resolved by proponents through other means. One can speculate that at least some of the proponents sensed the enormity of the resistance and proceeded to find other solutions. On the following page is an illustration of what would happen if all 2,324 warrant officer spaces were provided by converting commissioned officer spaces.

OGAL IMPACT ON AUTHORIZED OFFICER SPACES

CAUSED BY

INCREASING WARRANT OFFICER SPACES*

General Officer and Field Grade Losses Bases on:

| | <u>FY72**</u> <u>AUTH</u> | <u>LESS</u> <u>2324 OFF</u> |
|--------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| GO | 490 | 4 |
| COL | 4967 | 58 |
| LTC | 12038 | 234 |
| MAJ | <u>16730</u> | <u>340</u> |
| TOTALS | 34225 | 636 |

*An illustration of impact, not all 2324 spaces were to be created by converting commissioned spaces.

**Excludes medical/dental corps, reimbursables, and professors and deans at USMA.

FIGURE 2

Opposition, both formal and subtle, to these proposals is usually so strong it takes repeated intercessions from the highest departmental echelons to bring each action to fruition.

It is possible to overcome this conflict by one of two means. One, would be to consider the warrant officer as an officer and seek legislation which would commission him as the Navy and Marines do. Next Congress and DOD would have to be persuaded to include warrant officers in the total commissioned officer figure. This would expand the base from which the OGLA computations are made to establish the number of general and field grade officers authorized. In a realistic sense, given today's congressional mood, this alternative is almost guaranteed not to succeed.

It is the feeling of Congress that the "chief to indian" ratio is much too high and must be cut, thus any proposal to expand the computation base and hold OGLA at current ratios would meet with the stiffest kind of resistance.⁷

A second approach is to try once again to establish the warrant officer corps as a separate and distinct body which enjoys the social and ceremonial privileges of the officers corps but is not a part of the officer corps in any other cogent sense. I would dispose at the outset of the questions concerning a warrant officer doing an officer's job by saying current policies are adequate in this area. A warrant officer can and should fill a commissioned officer's billet in the absence of an officer, but this is no less true of the ranking NCO present. It is a simple matter of temporary succession and should not occur too often in a well managed organization.

CONGRESSIONAL DILEMMA

During the March 1954 House Armed Services Sub-committee hearings on H. R. 6374 (a statutory career plan for warrant officers of the Armed Forces), considerable discussion took place throughout the sessions in an effort to pin down precisely where a warrant officer stood in the military hierarchy.⁸ The legislators repeatedly insisted that the military service representatives give their opinions as to where they would place the warrant officer in a bi-polar continuum--nearer the enlisted or officer poles.

The military representatives added little to clarify the issue by varying widely in their replies with the Army placing them nearest officers and the USAF nearest enlisted. The Navy and Marines commission theirs (except for WO-1) and were thus on record in the matter. Only the DOD representative, Dr. Hannah, tried unsuccessfully to present the warrant officer as a truly separate entity being neither enlisted or commissioned officer.

Throughout the 1954 House hearings the legislators continued to discuss and compare warrant officers with officers to the extent that their committee counsel was forced to repeatedly enjoin them not to so closely associate warrant officers with officers because of the significant legal handicaps this could invoke upon them, i.e., dual compensation act. This difficulty of the legislators in grasping the concept of three separate and distinct groupings of uniformed service personnel was not helped by the Navy and Marine Corps practice of commissioning all their warrant officers above the grade of WOJG (W1). To this day the warrant officer corps continues to labor under this vague identity crisis which makes them "neither fish nor fowl"--the exact term which was used by the legislators in their graspings to understand the warrant officer's status. It was beyond their capacity or perhaps willingness to envision a third category such as "meat or vegetable" and yet it is proposed that this is where the answer lies for the Army.

CURRENT IDENTITY PROBLEMS

This basic identity problem persists to the present both in Congress and among the warrant officers in the Army. In October 1971 the Army Chief of Staff visited Okinawa, Kwajalein, Johnston Island, Hawaii, and Fort Ord. He had a member of his party interview warrant officers and submit a trip report. The report raised most of the issues covered in this paper and in the basic warrant officer study of 1966. The identity crisis came clearly to the fore in the report. Practices such as second lieutenants rating (OER) grizzled CWO's were raised. Many warrant officers felt that "at times, the expertise and experience level of senior warrant officers cannot be properly evaluated by a very young, junior officer." They also seemed to misunderstand the emphasis on their inferiority in precedence to the lowest ranking second lieutenant in view of the obvious deference with which many are treated by their de facto superiors.

In the conclusions to the report the author said it was not enough to vaguely define the warrant officer as a technician who is neither commissioned nor enlisted and that such notion are not congruent with the present day concepts of our society. He went on to state: "The warrant officer wants to be defined, recognized and considered so he fits in the Army where 'Every Man Counts.'"⁹

An example of how warrant officer identity becomes confused with commissioned officers is provided by the 1966 OPO warrant officer study. In a discussion on the merits of centralizing

warrant officer personnel management versus continuing with decentralized management by the officer career branches most closely associated with each warrant officer MOS, the study group queried the Army Officer Personnel Directorate (OPD) Officer Career Branches on what insignia they preferred warrant officers to wear.¹⁰ In their most understandable parochial enthusiasm the preponderant majority of officer branches elected to have the warrant officers wear their associated branch insignia and retain only the distinctive cap ornament. Thus an Air Defense Missile System Technician, HAWK, MOS 223C, who's career is managed by the Air Defense Officer Career Branch, would be required to wear the crossed cannon with missile insignia as do the air defense officers of that branch.

It was the recommendation of the 1966 study that all warrant officers be required to change insignia and adopt that of their associated officer career branch and that the Army's heraldry experts design a distinctive insignia for the WO aviators.¹¹ Thus, one more confusion factor is added to the problem of warrant officer identity. This particular problem arises from the currently decentralized management of warrant officers and more will be said of that issue later. Fortunately, the suggestion has not and should not be acted upon for the most obvious of reasons. The closer warrant officers are associated with their commissioned brethren the less they will be able to avoid the strictures and problems of the officer corps and be available for concentration in their unique area of technical specialization.

SUMMARY

To insure a better and more responsive warrant officer corps in the volunteer Army it is necessary that the continuing identity problem be settled. Two separate but complementary endeavors are suggested in this regard:

1. There is perplexion and a lack of understanding within Congress and even within the Services as to why the Navy and Marines continue to commission their warrant officers above the grade of WOJG (W-1) while the Army and Air Force have their respective service secretaries provide warrant officers with warrants of grade. It seems that tradition, as codified in law, is the principle which guides Navy and Marine commissioning practices and more will be said of this when it is discussed in connection with the way warrant officer grade progression is achieved by each service. However, in this day and age, it is the Army who has the major warrant officer stake (see figure 1) and it is possible to considerably strengthen the concept of a totally independent identity for warrant officers by having all services adopt the use of warrants of grade instead of some using commissions which are, in this period of history, distinctly officer corps accouterments and thus confusing.

2. DOD and Congress must also be persuaded to speed up developing a separate program for warrant officers. Criteria should be enacted into law and regulations which allows all to measure each military department's warrant officer content in terms

of the total force. In managing personnel assets this would make the warrant officer neither inferior to officers or superior to enlisted personnel but rather a distinctly separate but necessary part of the team. Their number should be determined in each service primarily by need and not by the impact it will have on the officer or enlisted personnel except in the broadest budgetary and balancing sense. Once this is done, and it cannot directly profit the officer corps or enlisted ranks to minimize the warrant officer content, it is predicted they will be seriously considered for use by the US/F and that the Army will be more objective in its use of warrant officers.

CHAPTER III

FOOTNOTES

1. US Law, Statutes, etc., United States Code, 1964, Vol 2, Title 10, Sec. 3202, p. 1324-25 (Hereafter referred to as "USC 10 OGLA").

2. US Department of the Air Force, Warrant Officers Ad Hoc Committee, Staff Study, Warrant Officer Requirements, pp. 1-7.

3. Ibid., pp. 5-6.

4. House Armed Services Committee Hearings on Warrant Officers--1954, p. 3638. Also see, Bourjaily WO History, p. 6.

5. US Congress, House, Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Defense, Subcommittee Hearings on Manpower Appropriations, p. 1370.

6. US Department of the Army, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Memorandum for Record: Proposals for Additional Warrant Officers, Summary Sheet and Tab M, OGLA Impact.

7. DOD OPMS Agenda, see Congressional statements appended to agenda materials.

8. House Armed Services Committee Hearings on Warrant Officers, 1954, pp. 3634-3638, and pp. 3643-3646.

9. US Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Staff, Memorandum for Record: Trip Report of CW4 Charles Astrike. Accompanying the Chief of Staff, Army, on His Trip to Okinawa, Hawaii and Fort Ord, 20-30 October 1971, pp. 1-4 (Hereafter referred to as "Chief of Staff-Astrike Trip Report").

10. OPO WO Study of 1966, pp. 178-9.

11. Ibid., p. 183.

CHAPTER IV

DUAL COMPONENTY

PROBLEM

A second problem confronting the warrant officer which is also quite significant stems from the post World War II decision to treat warrant officer careers in a manner similar to commissioned officers. Two different categories of warrants were created beginning in 1948 and 1949 when 6,000 Regular Army (RA) warrant officers were appointed.¹ This created a category of temporary warrant officers holding warrants in the Army of the United States and the permanently appointed warrant officers who held appointments in the Regular Army. As with the officer corps this dual componenty was justified by a long since outmoded concept that the expanded strength of the Army since World War II would some day no longer be needed and that all those with temporary appointments would be separated. By the Act of 1954 Regular Army warrant officer promotion points were fixed as follows:²

REGULAR ARMY WARRANT OFFICER PROMOTION SYSTEM*

| <u>GRADE</u> | <u>TIME IN GRADE (IG)</u> | <u>TIME IN SERVICE (TIS)</u> | <u>NUMBER AND MANNER OF SELECTION</u> |
|--------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| WO-1 | 3 | 0-3 | Fully qualified |
| CWO-2 | 6 | 4-9 | Best qualified, 80% |
| CWO-3 | 6 | 10-16 | " |
| CWO-4 | | 17 | |

FIGURE 3

*Data obtained from Title 10; USC, sec 559.

This duality of warrant officers was seen as a valuable and necessary means of flexibility whereby the Army could rapidly expand its temporary structure and not be limited by the time restraints on promotions imposed on RA appointments. The RA appointments were viewed as necessary and desirable for the guarantees they offered their holders in terms of tenure and career progression.

In actuality this dual componency has created within the warrant officer corps (as in the commissioned officer corps) a first and second class of citizenship. Its existence in the statutes, albeit currently dormant, thwarts the Army in seeking to advance and retain the best possible individuals for continued service as warrant officers. In the case of the currently structured warrant officer corps with only 4 grades, this situation of duality has also contributed significantly to the problem of adequate career incentives due to the early temporary promotions. Although the Congress has never really discussed the matter with regard to warrant officers it has often leveled the charge at the officer corps that grade creep and the unfavorable officer and field grade ratio to total Army strength is due to the use of temporary appointments in order to circumvent the fixed RA promotion points provided by law. Rightly or wrongly, more and more Congressmen and military personnel managers are coming to believe the military should return to a single means of advancement and eliminate the dual componency. This consciousness

and ferment for a single officer corps has been particularly strong within the personnel elements of the DA staff in the past 4 years and has now gained support among DOD staffers.³

SUMMARY

Future DOD legislative proposals affecting officers should, and more than likely will, contain a proposal to eliminate the current commissioned officer corps duality. More importantly, rather than fall back on the current RA legislation, future proposals on the subject should also seek to remove the currently imposed minimum limits for rates of selection and substitute a more sophisticated set of controls which answers the needs of the services by grade. As the warrant officer system is created in the image of the commissioned officer system, similar relief is needed and must be sought. With the benefit of such a new basis for career development the warrant officer would be put on a single, truly competitive basis where if he is the better he will advance and if he is not there will be no special interest legislation protecting his tenure.

CHAPTER IV

FOOTNOTES

1. US Law, Statutes, etc., United States Code, 1964, Vol. 2, Title 10, Sec. 555 and 597.

2. US Law, Statutes, etc., United States Code, 1964, Vol. 2, Title 10, Sec. 559, p. 1131.

3. Office of the Secretary of Defense, Memorandum for Secretaries of Military Departments Et Al: Officer Personnel Management, pp. 1-2. See also, DOD OPMS Agenda, Item 2 Attachment of Statement in H.A.S.C. Report 92-58 "Subcommittee on Utilization of Manpower" by Chairman Otis Pike on 28 June 1972. See also, OPMS Agenda, Item 3 Attachments.

CHAPTER V

CAREER PROGRESSION

BACKGROUND

For a short period of time after the 1954 Warrant Officer Career Act and the rather positive announcement in January of 1957 by the Army Chief of Staff that Army warrant officers were not only here to stay, but that the Army foresaw an increasing requirement for them, it appeared as if most major issues affecting warrant officers were settled. In that period almost all of the warrant officers were obtained from enlisted sources and the warrant officer structure offered an adequate pattern of career progression to attract the numbers and quality of men needed.

With the advent of missilery, the complex fields of electronics, hydraulics, electricity, communications, nuclear energy, and computers blossomed into areas where the unparalleled value of the highly qualified warrant officer specialist concept paid off handsomely. In the early days of the missile era, the Army searched within itself and found many capable senior NCO's and warrant officers in both related and unrelated fields who were retrained to fill the urgent gaps in skills. No other national educational system or industry were able to provide the skills to the Army in the numbers required. The Army was thus forced to establish schools and train needed personnel.

In this period reliance was placed on the draft incentive for manpower. Draft pressure, plus the high commercial value of the technical skills in the public sector attracted many young enlisted volunteers who subsequently left the service at the earliest opportunity. From these times of high turnover in lower grade enlisted technicians, some stayed on to become warrant officers and, in them, the first inkling of career progression problems began to surface. Need for their services caused the Army to offer warrant officer careers to rather young, very junior enlisted personnel, many with little prior active service.

PROBLEM

Once these bright young fellows entered the warrant officer ranks with accelerated promotions it soon became apparent that within approximately 10 years of warrant officer service and at about 13 to 15 years of total service, they would have climbed to the top of their career progression ladder with nowhere else to go. Thus, with no further incentives at about age 38 and having completed 20 years service the more ambitious could begin leaving the military through retirement to seek attractive new careers in industry.

Just as the consequence of taking in the younger breed of warrant officer were being realized in the mid-60's, another important decision affecting warrant officers was reached. It was decided that the Army was to go air mobile and that a majority of the pilots would be warrant officers. Because of the numbers needed

and rapidity of the buildup due to Vietnam, procurement actions were focused on draft motivated high school graduates who would volunteer, draftees who volunteered to extend their service commitment to fly and enlisted regulars who opted to go into the flying program. With the mass deployment of Army units to Vietnam and the rapid increase of aircraft in combat units, the demand for pilots grew apace. As the war dragged on, the ponderous pipeline requirement for pilots added to the numbers needed to keep cockpits manned in Vietnam and worldwide.

The impact on personnel management of these dynamic young flying warrant officers was not long in having its effect. Despite repeated combat tours, many truly liked their vocation and wanted to continue flying as a career in the Army. For such budding careerists even cursory assessments of existing career possibilities told them that they would exhaust advancement opportunities within about 16 years of warrant officer service if promotions slowed to the limits permitted by the RA statute. If temporary promotions were justified by the needs of the service, young competitive warrant officers could and were attaining CWO-4 in as little as 10 or 11 years or warranted service.¹

Many DA action officers have seriously suggested that since the aviators seem to have the problem of finding the four grade warrant officer career structure adequate that they, like the other warrant officers, should serve initially as enlisted personnel. It has been proposed that an aviation program

take in enlisted personnel who are taught to fly and are used as aviators until they reach the grades of E6 and E7. At that time those flyers who are needed would be offered warrants and from that point on their careers would parallel all other warrant officers.² Exponents of this view cite relatively recent history when enlisted aviators were flying for the services.

It is very doubtful that Army aircraft will get simpler in construction or in the necessary handling skills. Civilian industry and the sister services agree that the skills of an aviator are possessed by people with considerable education and executive type potential. The Army gave the least possible recognition to this concept by accepting high school graduates as aviators during the Vietnam buildup and by operating a warrant officer flying program. It is unrealistic to believe that in the face of such verities the Army will be able to attract sufficient quality aviator careerists by offering them initial enlisted status and then a warrant officer future which will still have them peak out at CW0-4 with approximately 20-23 years of service.

Thus, the era of missilery, computers, and helicopters with the technical opportunities these fields presented the warrant officer corps, forced the Army to deviate from its former main procurement source for warrant officers--the enlisted soldier with one or two enlistments. Whereas before, enlisted men averaging 6 to 8 years prior service were in the main acceding to warrant officer status, now another type of individual with little or not prior service was being sought. Legislation designed

in 1954 to accommodate warrant officer careers beginning with 6 to 8 years prior enlisted service was proving no longer adequate.

VOLAR IMPACT

Recently, yet another possible dimension is added to the "inadequacy" of the current warrant officer career structure. The presidential decision to develop a volunteer force can be expected to dry up quickly the high-quality, draft motivated volunteers who filled the enlisted missile and communications electronics jobs, computer maintenance and operations jobs, and the many aviation maintenance skills which a modern Army needs. With the high cost of training such personnel and the ready convertibility and demand for these skills in the civilian sector, it appears that the former high turnover enlisted personnel procurement practices are no longer suitable. In our increasingly materialistic society where the status and material recognition of young technicians is high, we can anticipate that specialist stripes and pro-pay will probably prove inadequate incentives. To attract and retain good technicians, we will need a warrant officer program designed to give full and challenging careers to young aspirants. They must be convinced a career exists which allows them to be productive members of the Army team for at least as long as the enlisted soldier or the officer. Almost daily more questions arise as to whether today's warrant officer structure is adequate in such a context.

ADDITIONAL GRADES DISCUSSION

Every major warrant officer study or restudy since 1964, has raised or has been directed to review the issue of a full 30 year career structure for warrant officers. All have recommended the addition of the grades CWO-5 and CWO-6. Although some of the rationale for such additions to the warrant officer grade structure has been inadequate, the proposals have in the main, focused on the right problem--namely younger accessions.³ In each case, the proposals have been sent back by the Chief of Staff or DCSPER for restudy and further rejustification.

DA staff arguments which have gained credence with Army decisionmakers in stopping these recommendations for increased grades, are persuasive and deserve attention. One is that we have no shortage of warrant officers or significant drops in retention except for aviators. Heavy aviator separations are explained away by looking at the procurement sources and pointing out, quite correctly, that most were draft motivated and would not have chosen military careers.⁴ This argument speaks to the quantity of personnel retained and accepts facially that the quality of the performance of those remaining on duty is the best available. It ignores the basic philosophy underlying the officer and enlisted grade structures which deems it absolutely essential to have nine enlisted grades and six officer grades below general officer level to properly motivate personnel to remain for a 30 year career and excel.

Another point offered to avoid adding two more warrant officer grades is that the Vietnam war had disrupted the personnel structure so badly that we must wait till the post Vietnam force structure could be determined to decide on warrant officers. This delaying of warrant officer career decisions is tied to the legislatively imposed officer-warrant officer relationship that was discussed earlier. The true concern is that no decisions affecting warrant officers should be allowed till the full impact of officer cuts can be assessed and the warrant officer corps strengths used to help alleviate the pressure.

The fact that the issue of needing the grades of CWO-5 and CWO-6 was raised and is being vigorously pushed by the aviators has prompted an additional visceral type of response. Using the previously mentioned quantitative argument that the Army gets and keeps all the warrant officers it needs except for aviators, some go on to say that there is no logic or justice for permitting the aviator element to reshape the rest of the warrant officer structure. It is said that early procurement of warrant officers is peculiar only to aviators and that their post Vietnam future in terms of quantity, is tenuous. Also, the argument goes on that the addition of CWO-5 and CWO-6 would almost be discriminatory in that only aviation careerists would benefit from such a structure. The impression is given that aviators would somehow dominate the warrant officer hierarchy to the detriment of the other types of warrant officers.⁵

This argument is very weak on a number of counts. First, we know that warrant officers as a group do not work for or compete with each other in the same sense officers do to get to the very top of their hierarchy. The warrant officer forte is rather narrow specialization and promotions for him are incentives to stay on in his specialty and to improve himself technically in the process.⁶ If one type of warrant officer begins his career later than another and he cannot for some reason stay on long enough to reach the top warrant officer grades this should be understandable and acceptable to him with the caveat that if he remains competitive the Army should be obliged to assure him of attaining retirement status. If another type of warrant officer begins his career much earlier it is wrong not to have appropriately spaced progression incentives throughout a full 30 year career which keeps him interested, competitive, and assures the Army its pick of the best available.

Further, it should be noted that we are entering the new volunteer force era where we will probably find a number of additional candidate skills (computers, missiles, electronics) that have a need for early accession warrant officers.

NAVY AND USMC PROGRAMS

This need for young warrant officers and the provision for full careers is recognized by both of the other services currently using warrant officers--the Navy and Marine Corps.

Their traditions and use of warrant officers is in many ways quite different from the Army and therefore their attempted solutions to a curtailed career structure differ. Primarily, they differ in that they use available legislation to commission their warrant officer in each grade above WO-1. Both Marines and Navy have made use of the limited duty officer (LDO) legislation and the Army and Air Force have refused it. Thus, with their experience both have chosen to give some warrant officers fuller careers within policies and legislation either not available to or not desired for use by the Army.

In the case of the Marine Corps their philosophy for use of warrant officers is somewhat like the Army's; the warrant officer is to be used as a specialist or technician. The candidate is drawn from the enlisted personnel and must meet certain qualifications. He cannot have over 12 years active duty and must be serving in the grade of sergeant or above. Without going any further the typical career pattern duplicates the Army's and is subject to the same problems of stagnation facing the young early accession Army warrant officers. However, in certain specialist fields there are limited duty commissioned officer spaces for which warrant officers may compete. This is called the LDO program. To be eligible the warrant officer must have a skill which is encompassed in the LDO program (staff NCO's may also compete). The warrant officer must have a minimum of 10 years and a maximum of 20 years active naval service to be eligible. If selected he becomes a limited duty officer temporary, LDO (T), and is

commissioned in the grade of first lieutenant. Again, if he is in a technical area that has spaces for field grade officers, he may, thru competition, attain the maximum grade of lieutenant colonel. For those former warrant officers who stay competitive retirement as a captain can be reasonably assured.⁷

Thus the Marine Corps today provides an uneven career opportunity for its warrant officers. Some who accede early into technical fields with no LDO spaces in the commissioned structure are limited to attainment of CWO-4 and possible stagnation. For others who have LDO spaces in the commissioned structure the possibility of continued advancement is somehow provided for.

The Navy, as with the Marines, has used the warrant officer structure to give recognition and status to their technically skilled specialists. In the past the Navy procured their warrant officers from the enlisted ranks and provided additional career incentives for those few who could qualify by means of the LDO program. However, because of their concurrent use of the LDO program to obtain specialists, there have been personnel policy conflicts and considerable confusion exists among program participants.⁸ In an attempt to stabilize the LDO and warrant officer situation, the Navy convened two boards, the Williams Board in 1959 and the Settlet Board in 1963.

The Williams Board recommended using the LDO Program and to curtail the warrant officer program.⁹ This was overturned by the Settlet Board in 1963. They recommended a revised

warrant officer program be re-established and that it serve as the sole procurement source for LDO.¹⁰ It is significant to note that in the 1963 period, as with Army and Marine policy, the enlisted eligibility requirement for entering the warrant officer corps included considerable prior enlisted service and attainment of the grades of E6 and E7.

By FY 1971 the Navy recognized the need for inputs younger in age into the warrant officer ranks and are putting together a volunteer force career package for the ambitious and competitive enlisted man which allows him to compete for warrant officer after six years active service.¹¹ If he follows the stylized career progression pattern, he can attain CWO-4 within 10 years. If his specialty has LDO spaces in the commissioned structure, he may compete for commissioned officer status once he achieved the grade of CWO-2 or CWO-3. As an LDO he is afforded nearly comparable selection rates to the unrestricted line officers until he reaches the grade of Lieutenant Commander (LCDR). If he is one of those picked for LCDR, he has a very good opportunity for progression (70%) to the grade of Commander, which is as high as an LDO may go.¹²

Thus, we see that the Navy also has attempted by means of various graftings and adjustments to make use of the "bobtailed" warrant officer career structure in a way where it will continue to serve a useful purpose in a volunteer force. The Navy has done this selectively and within current personnel concepts which still

leave many warrant officer positions with no LDO outlets. Sailors who accede early, as with their counterparts in the Army and Marines, eventually peak out at CWO-4 in their 16th thru 20th years of active service.

SUMMARY

To summarize the warrant officer career progression dilemma, the military personnel managers currently have no persuasive incentives or other personnel management tools that can be applied equitably to all warrant officers to keep on the best qualified beyond 20 years and eliminate those who are no longer needed. Incorporation in the grade structure of the repeatedly recommended grades of CWO-5 and CWO-6 would fill that void. The 1954 concept that warrant officers would continue to accede after considerable service as former enlisted personnel is no longer adequate for Army aviators as a minimum and with a volunteer force will be challenged in other technical areas as well. The warrant officers constitute the only personnel grouping of the three which does not provide for a full 30 year career structure. In the technical specialists area which is the warrant officer's domain, there are particularly compelling reasons why the principles of supra-annuation which apply to the more active combat roles would not apply. This could mean promising cost effective manpower uses and benefits to both the individual and the Army by structuring careers not only to 30 years of service but even beyond.

CHAPTER V

FOOTNOTES

1. OPO WO Study of 1966, p. 111.
2. US Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Disposition Form: Restudy of the Additional Warrant Officer Grades of Rank CW5/CW6, p. 2. See also Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Disposition Form: Additional Warrant Officer Grades (W-5/W-6), p. 1.
3. OPO WO Study of 1966, p. 199. See also, US Department of the Army, Office of Personnel Operations, Report-Restudy of the Additional Warrant Officer Grades of Rank CW5/CW6, p. 10. Also see, US Department of the Army, Office of Personnel Operations, Report-Restudy of the Additional Warrant Officer Grades of Rank CW5/CW6 and of Additional Career Courses for Warrant Officers, p. 12.
4. US Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of State for Personnel, Disposition Form: Restudy of the Additional Warrant Officer Grade of Rank CW5/CW6, p. 3 (Hereafter referred to as "Additional WO Grades CW5/CW6").
5. US Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Disposition Form: Restudy of the Additional Warrant Officer Grades of Rank CW5/CW6, pp. 1-2 (Hereafter referred to as "Restudy of WO Grades CW5/CW6").
6. US Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Disposition Form: Career Planning for Army Warrant Officers, p. 2. (Hereafter referred to as "Career Planning for WO").
7. US Department of the Navy, Headquarters United States Marine Corps, Marine Corps Order 1040. 14D: Limited Duty Officer and Warrant Officer Programs, pp. 1-2 and inclosures. See also, Department of the Navy, Headquarters United States Marine Corps, Memorandum for The Secretary of the Navy: Revised Program for Warrant and Limited Duty Officers, p. 1. Also interview with Donald T. Dale, III, Major, Department of the Navy, Headquarters United States Marine Corps, G-1 (AOIC), 20 October 1972.
8. US Department of the Navy, Bureau of Naval Personnel, Draft Staff Study Notes: Past Bleak-Future Bright, Enlisted to LDO, pp. 5-7 (Hereafter referred to as the "Navy--Enlisted to LDO Draft Study"). Interview with John Harms, LCDR, and Peter S. Gingras, LCDR, Department of the Navy, Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, 2 November 1972.

9. Ibid., p. 3.
10. Ibid., p. 4.
11. Ibid., p. 9.
12. Ibid., p. 12.
13. Ibid., pp. 2-9.

CHAPTER VI

PAY

SENIOR NCO PAY LOSS

Current pay scales for warrant officers are inadequate in that no provision has been made to protect the pay entitlement of technically qualified senior NCO who opt to accept warrant officer status. This came about as a result of adding the two enlisted "super" grades (E8, E9) without concurrently adjusting warrant officer pay to maintain the relative difference which formerly existed between enlisted and warrant officer salaries. The Congressional hearings in 1953 addressed the pay problem and discussions which are on the record indicated an intent not to put a "save pay" clause in that law. Somehow this problem was not subsequently addressed in other more appropriate legislation and ever since then a significant number of senior enlisted personnel with considerable prior service have had to absorb temporary financial sacrifices in order to accept warrant officer status.¹

Figure 4 below illustrates the problem:

| | SELECTED GRADES PAY COMPARISON | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | <u>E8</u> | <u>WO1</u> | <u>O1</u> |
| Base Pay (Mo.) | 699.90 | 667.80 | 537.70 |
| Uniform Allowance | 6.60 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Quarters Allow | | | |
| w/Dep | 172.20 | 160.80 | 141.60 |
| Subs Allow | 43.80 | 47.88 | 47.88 |
| Pro Pay | <u>75.00 (P2)</u> | <u>0.00</u> | <u>0.00</u> |
| Totals | 1097.50 | 876.48 | 720.18 |

SELECTED GRADES
PAY COMPARISON

| | <u>E7</u> | <u>E7</u> | <u>WO1</u> |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Base Pay (mo.) | 606.30 | 606.30 | 667.80 |
| Uniform Allow | 6.60 | 6.60 | 0.00 |
| Quarters Allow | | | |
| w/dep | 161.40 | 161.40 | 160.80 |
| Subs Allow | 43.80 | 43.80 | 47.88 |
| Pro Pay | <u>75.00 (P2)</u> | <u>100.00 (P3)</u> | <u>0.00</u> |
| Totals | 893.10 | 918.10 | 876.48 |

| | <u>E6</u> | <u>E6</u> | <u>WO1</u> |
|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Base Pay (Mo.) | 541.50 | 541.50 | 667.80 |
| Uniform Allow | 6.60 | 6.60 | 0.00 |
| Qtrs Allow w/dep | 150.00 | 150.00 | 160.80 |
| Subs Allow | 43.80 | 43.80 | 47.88 |
| Pro Pay | <u>75.00 (P2)</u> | <u>100.00 (P3)</u> | <u>0.00</u> |
| Totals | 816.90 | 841.90 | 876.48 |

Note: Illustrative grades reflect base pay at 10 years service as this is most representative of prior enlisted service at time of transition to warrant officer status. Pay rates are those which were effective 1 January 1971. BAQ rates are those effective 14 November 1972. 01 Pay reflects entry level--2 years active service.

FIGURE 4

FLIGHT PAY DISPARITY

Another pay issue which has never been answered to the satisfaction of warrant officer aviators is the disparity in flight pay between them and their commissioned officer cohorts. This is a great concern of the rated warrant officer. The Army's Vietnam experience found warrant officers flew as much as the commissioned officers and that duties and functions often intermeshed. It will be ever harder to continue to ignore the questions. They deserve a well reasoned, cogent and authoritative answer whether it be based on budgetary realities, responsibility differences or simply seniority.

ILLUSTRATIVE FLIGHT PAY TABLE

| | <u>01</u> | <u>WO-1</u> | <u>02</u> | <u>WO-2</u> | <u>03</u> | <u>WO-3</u> |
|---------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| >2 yrs. | 115.00 | 105.00 | 145.00 | 110.00 | | |
| <2 yrs. | 125.00 | 110.00 | 155.00 | 115.00 | | |
| <8 yrs. | | | | | 195.00 | 125.00 |

*Extracted from DA pay scales effective 14 November 1971.

FIGURE 5

PAY AS A MANAGEMENT TOOL

More important than the remedial measures necessary to save the pay of certain enlisted personnel who accept warrants after long enlisted status and the commissioned officer/warrant officer flight pay disparity, is the matter of using pay to give the individual and personnel managers incentives and controls with which to retain the best for a full 30 years or more career. At present both CWO-3 and CWO-4 pay grades receive their last significant promotions at about 20-22 years of service. Thereafter, their only pay incentive is the longevity increases thru their 26th year of service. It is safe to assume that for many of the best quality warrant officers possessing high technologic skills, civilian second career opportunities become irresistible soon after the last promotion. Thus at the very time when the Army should be deriving maximum benefit from its best and most seasoned technicians, it is left to make do with the less able.

A DOD level group should be tasked to devise related pay scales for the proposed six warrant officer grades, which would insure that adequate incentives and competitiveness are provided to keep

in service for as long as necessary the very best warrant officer technicians in all skill categories. This is no more or less than is accomplished by the philosophy which underlies the enlisted and officer pay scale through a full 30 year career spectrum.

SUMMARY

Although it is beyond the scope of this paper to design a supportive pay scale for a full career warrant officer grade structure, it is apropos to advance a caution and make suggestions. Past studies and staff papers have recommended somehow equating warrant officer grade structure and related pay matters to the officer corps. These proposals have been poorly received and easily disposed of by bringing up the fundamental differences in responsibility and purpose of the two groups.²

The design of a pay structure for technical specialists should be based upon making salaries attractive and competitive enough to draw and retain from the private sector a fair share of high quality technicians. No regard should be given to how technical salaries (WO) relate to management salaries (officer) since it has already been announced that officer salaries will be competitive with the private sector after the pay raise on 1 January 1973. If that be so, then establishment of competitive salaries for military technicians will also achieve a balance which is recognized in the private sector. For the few near exotic skills

which may crop up from time to time military competitiveness may be achieved by use of pro-pay provisions or other special bonuses as the situation demands.

CHAPTER VI

FOOTNOTES

1. House Armed Services Committee Hearings on Warrant Officers. 1954, pp. 3633-3634.

2. Restudy of WO Grades CW5/CW6, p. 2. See also US Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, (DMPP), Disposition Form: Restudy of the Additional Warrant Officer Grades of Rank CW5/CSW6, p. 1. See also, US Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Suggestion Number M-4-32-71, p. 2.

CHAPTER VII

BROADEN WARRANT OFFICER TECHNICAL FIELDS

PROBLEM AND DISCUSSION

Due primarily to Congressional prodding the officer corps ratio is being reduced from a 1972 high of 14.6% to 12.8% by 1974.¹ Officers will have to be used much more frugally in the future and if used properly they will fill the managerial and generalist positions for which they are exhaustively prepared. This cutback in the officer ratio could be facilitated by vacating many highly specialized jobs in which officers carved out defacto domains because they possessed the academic credentials.²

In the past, highly believable rationales were offered as to why officers should "specialize" in missile and aircraft design or computer science. It was shown that officers were needed with specialized degrees in the supportive medical areas. Yet it makes no real sense to send a quartermaster or signal officer to become a computer specialist nor does it pay to intensively school an air defense officer in missile design and hydraulics. Branch qualified officers are torn between being true to their first calling or continuing in the specialty to the point where they maximize their knowledge and contribute to the specialty. If they do stay in the specialty long enough they would be compromising proficiency and status within their branch and in the many other legitimate leadership/management areas where their talents should

be developed and used. Thus, promotion trends to the contrary, either the specialty or the branch/generalist development suffers when an officer is asked or expected to do both.

In a number of technical areas currently monopolized by officer specialists the charter of the warrant officer corps could fill the needs with slight changes. Further, the Army should take it on as a priority responsibility to make the warrant officer corps stand high enough in prestige to attract as careerists people who formerly took commissions to do those jobs. If need be incentives similar to the ROTC scholarship program could be offered to educate and obtain the skills needed.

The suggestion for withdrawing officer specialists out of the technical areas applies only to those areas which are technical and within the domain of the warrant officer corps. Undue attention should not be given to officer corps arguments that officers need extensive technical skills to adequately supervise and manage such operations. The degree of skill needed by a manager to adequately control a technical operation can be obtained via brief orientation and familiarization courses. What could be recognized and taken into account is the considerable attrition experienced by the Army among officers with highly marketable technical skills. Many of the skills were obtained at government expense. Recent DA personnel commentaries have made a point of the correlation between officers with highly marketable civilian skills and the difficulty in satisfying their expectations within the military service.³

SUMMARY

A policy decision to move selected technical skills from the officer domain to the periphery of warrant officers which is backed by liberal educational incentives and, competitive compensation could do a lot to ease the strain and improve the Army as the forced officer corps reductions come.

CHAPTER VII

FOOTNOTES

1. Interview with William E. Weber, Colonel, Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Directorate of Military Personnel Policy, Promotions and Separations Division, Washington, 5 December 1972. (Hereafter referred to as "Weber Interview").

2. Additional WO Grades CW5/CW6, p. 3.

3. Weber Interview, Washington, 5 December 1972.

CHAPTER VIII

EDUCATION

PROBLEM AND DISCUSSION

VOLAR realities and the demand for better personnel management controls will sooner or later force a full career grade structure for the warrant officers. It is within such a framework and with expanded roles that warrant officer education should be addressed. Educational attainment in early adulthood has proved a reliable indicator of potential. Government agencies, the private sector, and the military all place considerable faith in the high correlation between a youth's level of formal schooling and his ultimate value to the organization. Current Army policy seeks an officer corps which is 100 percent educated to the baccalaureate level. The general education goal for the warrant officer corps is attainment of associate degrees.¹ And for enlisted personnel the high school diploma or its equivalent is sought.

The goal set for warrant officers suggests an inferiority in the quality of individuals acceptable in the warrant officer corps as compared to officers and may prove detrimental in fully exploiting the future potential of the warrant officer corps. The standard now espoused is a minimum goal and it applies across the spectrum without regard to specialty. Yet, by setting the minimum, difficulties are engendered in the sensitivities and perceptions of the youth we may be seeking to attract in the future.

High quality warrant officers in fields such as electronics, aviation, and computers with extensive educations, knowledge and experience in their specialty could prove of inestimable value in developing Army specifications for complex equipment, monitoring industrial compliance and production, testing, field servicing and modifying the material during its life cycle. This type of intensively trained warrant officers could achieve dividends for the Army which cannot be expected or garnered of commissioned officers because of their broader career demands.

If the decision is made to bring into the warrant officer corps technical skills requiring an initial baccalaureate degree, or perhaps advanced degrees, the educational criteria should be advertised as varying with the skill pursued rather than as a flat associate degree minimum across the spectrum of skills. As warrant officers of a higher educational cut are assimilated the nature of their duties and contributions will undoubtedly result in the establishment of an advanced civil schooling program for those working in fields that merit the attainment of the higher levels of knowledge.

SUMMARY

Now is the time to begin preparing a series of skills related warrant officer educational programs which will:

1. Attract applicants to the corps (pre-warranting education. Scholarships?).

2. Commit the Army for additional incremental technical training or education as is required (civil or military).

3. Provide for advanced degree civil schooling when and as needed.

CHAPTER VIII

FOOTNOTES

1. US Department of the Army, Office of Personnel Operations, Pamphlet 600-11: Career Planning for Army Warrant Officers, p. 5-1.

CHAPTER IX

CENTRALIZED VS DECENTRALIZED PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

Today there are some 68 Warrant Officer MOS grouped in 26 career patterns. The 26 career fields are distributed among 12 Department of the Army, OPD Career Management Branches and a warrant officer aviation branch for personnel administration. The density of MOS per officer branch ranges from none in some branches to a high of 15 MOS in Ordnance Branch.¹ The issue of centralized versus decentralized warrant officer management is an important and continuing one. It is proposed that the key factor in reaching a proper decision in this area centers on the more crucial question of a separate and distinctive identity for warrant officers. As was pointed out earlier in this paper, on the question of warrant officers insignia, officer corps managers of warrant officer careers tend to decide what is best for warrant officers in terms of what is best for commissioned officers.

The question as to whether warrant officer personnel management should be centralized as a separate corps was addressed in the definitive 1966 warrant officer study conducted by the Department of the Army, Office of Personnel Operations (OPO).² The issue was apparently influenced by a contemporary officer personnel management review which evoked a Chief of Staff comment, to the effect that the validity of the branch system as a structure for

management of commissioned officers was recently confirmed. Curiously, this confirmation of the branch concept for managing officers was allowed to guide the study groups thinking to the point where the adequacy of the decentralized branch management approach for warrant officers (who are actually managed by MOS) dominated the discussion and only cursory remarks were directed to the virtues or inadequacies in centralizing warrant officer management.³

The validity of centrally managing warrant officer aviators was established by the study. However, it never occurred to the study group to discuss the merits of centralizing the remaining warrant officers and then apply the blessed but inappropriate concept of branch personnel management to them. Centralized management was deprecated because of the alleged separation this would bring about from the related officer branches which possessed the needed "total personnel support." Centralization was also discounted because of the cost in added manpower it would entail, office space that would be needed, and the additional equipment required.

No thought was given to using the aviation warrant officer branch as a nucleus, and to decrementing the officer branches proportionately for the added personnel, equipment, and office spaces which could be withdrawn with the shift in warrant officer management functions. Further, the study recommended adding a warrant officer plans branch; these spaces could also have been used to create a new warrant officer personnel directorate.

The 1966 study concluded decentralized control by the officer branches was adequate personnel management for warrant officers.

Career branches today handle warrant officers as an added function. A quick survey will reveal that warrant officer matters certainly command no significant space in periodic newsletters or other branch information media. They certainly do not preempt much branch planning or research time in devising for them original programs. Warrant officer matters are dealt with routinely within career branches and except for the meaningful contributions made by the Warrant Officers Plans Division in OPO and in the Warrant Officer Aviator Branch nothing positive or forward looking can be expected to surface from the commission officer career branches. In fairness to the overworked and often unrecognized career branches it is too much to expect them to look effectively after commissioned officer careers full time and to also serve warrant officers with as much energy and efficiency.

The Army Chief of Staff's Pacific and West coast trip of 1971 referred to earlier, tends to also indict the current decentralized system of warrant officer management. It was found the warrant officers were quite uninformed of basic policy and uncertain of their status. They wondered about the future of the warrant officer corps and whether the fundamental policies still applied in view of the new volunteer forces. They asked about many issues important to them which continued to go unanswered.⁴

SEPARATE IDENTITY FACTOR

Considering only administrative nuances the answer to proper management lies in a directorate which would be guided by MOS management principles more akin to the enlisted directorate than to the officer branch system. But more is involved here than efficient administrative alignment of personnel functions. Earlier, the subject of a warrant officer identity crisis was broached. It was pointed out that current defense administrative procedures and Congressional perceptions seriously confuse warrant officers with officers. It is noted that both in the DA staff and now in OPO the warrant officer's fate is entirely in the hands of a necessarily partial officer corps where it is often possible to use WO numbers to ameliorate officer strength and promotion problems. When questions of warrant officer use in new fields arise it is exclusively officers, with direct self interest, who decide the outcome. When the officer corps pauses, the warrant officers and their peculiar problems must wait till officer issues are decided before they can get a hearing. It should be noted that such conflicts do not happen with the enlisted personnel because their fate and management is largely disassociated from the officer corps except in setting the basic officer-enlisted corps ratios.

The most compelling and worthwhile reason to centralize WO personnel management into a separate and coequal personnel directorate is to reinforce the fundamental premise made earlier that warrant officers are the "third" distinctive personnel

element; they are not officers and they are not enlisted personnel. Specialty skill management of individuals within a small, well structured warrant officer directorate could be easily accomplished. It would give visibility and substantive influence to warrant officer issues and would enable that directorate to pursue them with skill within the Army staff. A centralized warrant officer directorate in OPO would soon evoke counterpart expertise and points of contact on the Army Staff where the new awareness would insure quicker and more impartial treatment of warrant officer issues.

LEVELS OF SKILL RELATED TO GRADE AND POSITIONS

While discussing personnel management of warrant officers an important related issue must be broached and put in context. In the past, some OPO proponents of a full 30 year grade structure tried to make a better case for the addition of grades CW0-5 and CW0-6 by suggesting assigning required grades to warrant officer positions in manning documents. After drawing invalid parallels from the officer corps, they sponsored the conduct of extensive job analysis to attach an optimal grade to each space within an MOS field. The COPO study of 1966 addressed this point and it was put aside because it:

1. Is necessary that highly skilled technicians regardless of grade serve repeated assignments with or return often to their equipment (hands on concept) to maintain their proficiency.

2. Would necessitate promotions within MOS and thus not insure a uniform high quality of warrant officers across the spectrum. This concept of promotions proved too parochial and political in the officer corps and was discarded. Promotions are tied to the competitive manner of performance and not to service in any planned echelonment of organizational levels.

3. Reduced unnecessarily management flexibility in getting the best man into the place where there are problems.⁵

In 1967, the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower) asked to have the problem reexamined with the essential difference that "acquired levels of skill need be related only to grade of rank, not position."⁶ The study was accomplished by the COPO and it was concluded "there were sufficient MOS within which separate skill levels or levels of utilization can be identified to justify a six grade structure." While the study group was working on the analysis to determine the logic of six grade levels it was asked to consider application of the six grade concept to only certain MOS and to employ pro-pay in lieu of grades to still others. Because of the obvious inequities of such dicotomies and their implications to morale in the warrant officer corps the findings and conclusions attached to that variation did not lead to changes in positions taken in the basic 1966 OPO study.

At this point in time, most informed opinion recognizes that it is unnecessary to introduce unneeded problems of seniority and precedence among warrant officers. The 1967 follow-on study

provided valuable substantive data for strengthening the case for added grades before Congress, it successfully identified meaningful distinctions in six levels of grade progression and that it is against these that individual achievement can be measured in order to be recognized if present or denied if lacking.

SUMMARY

The issue of how best to manage warrant officers must be settled with a full recognition that today they are fragmented and immersed in the huge commissioned officer structure. There is no distinctiveness in their being; their futures are too closely enmeshed with the commissioned officers, and their unique technical skill capacities cannot be as fully orchestrated under the current diversity of managers. To further the primary cause of a separate and distinct identity for warrant officers, they should be disassociated from the commissioned officers and a separate directorate established to manage their special contributions to the Army team.

CHAPTER IX

FOOTNOTES

1. US Department of the Army, Office of Personnel Operations, Pamphlet 600-11: Career Planning for Army Warrant Officers, p. 5-1. Data on number of MOS and their management distribution was compiled from the cited reference and confirmed with DA OPO Warrant Officer Career Plans Division.

2. OPO WO Study of 1966, pp. 166-182.

3. Ibid., p. 167.

4. Chief of Staff Astrike Trip Report, pp. 1-2.

5. OPO WO Study of 1966, p. 107. See also Career Planning for WO, p. 2.

6. OPO WO Restudy 1967, pp. 1-3.

CHAPTER X

PROPOSED JOINT SERVICES POSITION

GENERAL

The services have in various ways coped with the current inadequacies of their warrant officer programs. Due to legal strictures directly affecting the officer corps the USAF has understandably sacrificed warrant officers in favor of officers. The Navy and Marines, because of their traditional uses of warrant officers and acceptance of the LDO concept, have attempted to integrate the two programs to meet their personnel needs. The Army which now has the biggest need for warrant officers has not commissioned them and with the USAF has not used the LDO program.

All of the services have to one extent or another wrestled with two fundamental problems affecting warrant officers: one, the problem of a distinctive identity and two, the abbreviated career structure. Other factors to be considered in proposing a joint service position is the phenomenon of officer grade creep, the pressure for single componentcy in the officer corps, and the volunteer force impact.

ADDITIONAL GRADES

To begin with the least debatable from a pure personnel management point of view, it makes little sense to have a personnel grade structure which cannot be adequately controlled to insure

the institution retains the best personnel and eliminates the least qualified. It also makes no management sense in a volunteer force environment to have a personnel program which is not structured to accommodate and induce the complete range of possible accessions; especially when evidence is appearing in every service that young full career warrant officers may be needed.

The Congress and many in the military are convinced we have too many officers in the military. The officer ratios in every service will be reduced. Many of the jobs held by officers which will be eliminated still have to be done and many are highly technical. The warrant officer corps is recognized by all services as the special province for technology. With an expanded career structure which includes CWO-5 and CWO-6, a conscious boost in prestige and competitive technical salaries, the warrant officers could take over the majority of technical jobs now done by officers.

Reliance on the combined warrant officer and LDO approach now used by the Navy and Marines or the possible elimination of warrant officers and exclusive use of LDO is unsound in the face of current personnel trends and Congressional/Services sentiment. The move today is toward clearly equitable policies and this is spurring single competency in the officer corps. The defacto existence of second class citizens in the form of reserve officers has been recognized and will soon be eliminated.

SINGLE COMPONENTY

What does equitable policy and single componenty mean to the warrant officer situation and possible combinations of that program with LDO? It means that programs which only give some participants the opportunity to achieve full careers are inequitable and inadequate. In the Navy and Marines there is no across the board opportunity to achieve LDO status. The answer might be to somehow devise an LDO extension for all skills and thus overcome the lack of opportunity. But, this presupposed the continuance of the LDO program and this may not happen. As the Navy well knows, and it is adequately documented in their personnel actions during the Vietnam buildup, the LDO is another breed of second class citizen within the officer corps.¹ That type of individual is not competitive with career officers and has an even bigger identity problem than do the warrant officers. Navy LDO personnel policies have had to continually undergo many adjustments in order to provide some degree of equity to personnel who are clearly second class citizens by any standard.²

It does not seem like a safe bet for the Army to choose the LDO program as a capstone to the abbreviated warrant officer structure nor is it wise for the other services to continue to rely upon its continuance. LDO's are second class officers and it is imprudent policy to recognize and eliminate one type of inequity (reserve officers) in status while allowing another to be adopted or remain. This is especially true when something as

promising as an expanded warrant officer program exists as an alternative to the LDO.

IDENTITY CRISIS

With regard to the problem of identity the origins of the best solution again lie outside the services. Laws should be changed to separate warrant officers from the officer corps. Much could be achieved to insure their difference by uniformly warranting rather than allowing commissioning as is now done by the Navy and Marines. Laws could certainly be structured to give warrant officers any particular rights Congress may choose and to also preserve any rights commissioned warrant officers may now have. It is of paramount importance that great care is taken by Service and Defense representatives in future proposals affecting warrant officers to stress their distinctiveness and unique place on the services teams. DOD could contribute significantly in the area of strengthening warrant officer identity by expeditiously invoking a separate personnel management program for warrant officers and instituting personnel accounting and budgeting procedures which separately identify warrant officers from commissioned officers.

STRATEGY FOR CONGRESS

It is considered that the Congressional mood is now poor for asking to add two additional warrant officer grades. But, the Congress is sufficiently interested in another aspect of

military personnel policy whereby an expanded grade structure could be sold. The Congress is above all insisting on more uniform and equitable personnel policies. Via this suggested joint services approach the God of uniformity would be well satiated by:

1. Warranting rather than commissioning all warrant officers.
2. Elimination of the limited duty officer category.
3. Elimination of dual competency in the warrant officer corps.
4. Creating a standard, competitive pay table for all services which at the same time eliminates current inequities.
5. Permitting consistent and separate executive level management for warrant officers which would disengage them from the officer-enlisted identity compendium and encourage both Congress and DOD to recognize and manage them separately and distinctly.

Along with the above key measures, supportive programs to enhance warrant officer status, expand their role, and separate identity could be undertaken. In the Army particularly:

1. Educational opportunities should be liberalized. Directive should be prepared and voiced about that college and post graduate educations are available to persons who agree to enter warrant officer fields requiring such backgrounds. Scholarships should be offered in technical fields where the Army needs long term, high quality personnel.

2. Personnel management should be separated from the commissioned officer corps and established in a separate warrant officer corps directorate.

3. Candidate technical fields which are now manned by commissioned officers should be carefully evaluated for transfer to an expanded and more sophisticated warrant officer corps.

4. An in-house information program should be developed about the important decisions taken above and the whole Army adequately informed of the new course which is to be charted by the improved warrant officer career program. The information effort would focus on the full range career structure, competitive pay status, possible incorporation of new fields (from the officer corps) and centralized warrant officer management. Most importantly the warrant officer's niche on the Army team would be established by an information program which emphasizes his unique technical contribution to a highly integrated, technologically dependent contemporary force.

SUMMARY

Until now, the warrant officer has been a loyal, hardworking, contributor to the Army team who has not, as a corps, received the recognition and distinction his contribution merits. By now the Army and our sister services have amassed sufficient indicators to realize that these extremely valuable technicians may well have an even bigger technical role as our forces become smaller and more sophisticated. The near term future foretells a need

for more technicians in our forces and reduction in the ratio of leaders and managers as we get smaller. Prudence demands that in these circumstances we immediately reassess the warrant officer career program along the lines suggested with a view to maximizing the warrant officer personnel contribution to the Army and sister services team.



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CHAPTER X

FOOTNOTES

1. Navy-Enlisted to LDO Draft Study, pp. 3-7 and 11-14.
2. Ibid., pp. 3-7 and 11-14.

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